

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 HA-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 /088 W

-----029364 171726Z /43

O 171621Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8740

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE POUCH

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

AMCONSUL BUKAVU POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 2614

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINR, CG

MOBUTU ANNOUNCES EXECUTION OF THIRTEEN COUP PLOTTERS

REF: (A) KINSHASA 2566 (B) KINSHASA 2610

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT MOBUTU WENT ON ZAIRIAN RADIO AND TELEVISION

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AT 1300 LOCAL TIME MARCH 17 TO ANNOUNCED THAT 13 OF THE 14
INDIVIDUALS SENTENCED TO DEATH AT CONCLUSION OF COUP PLOT TRIAL
THE DAY BEFORE (REF A) WERE EXECUTED AT DAWN TODAY. TAKING
AN EXTREMELY TOUGH LINE, MOBUTU CASTIGATED UNNAMED FOREIGN
EMBASSIES FOR THEIR ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUP PLOT AND
REJECTED CONCEPT OF APPEALS ON HUMAN RIGHTS' GROUNDS. MOBUTU
PROMISED TO DEAL EQUALLY SEVERELY WITH ANY FUTURE PLOTTERS AGAINST

THE REGIME.
END SUMMARY

2. MOBUTU BEGAN BY GIVING A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE GOVERNMENT'S VERSION OF THE COUP PLOT. EVIDENCING HIS SENSITIVITY TO ANY SLIGHT, HE PLACED CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS ON CONSPIRATORS' INTENTION TO USE URBAN TERRORIST TACTICS IN ORDER TO DISCREDIT HIS REGIME AND TO HOLD HIM UP TO RIDICULE.

3. MOBUTU CLAIMED THAT UNNAMED FOREIGN POWERS HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN COUP PLOTTING, EITHER DIRECTLY OR UNDER COVER OF THEIR DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN KINSHASA, BUT DID NOT ELABORATE. HE WENT TO SOME PAINS TO CLAIM THAT THE TRIAL HAD BEEN FREE, THAT THE ACCUSED HAD HAD EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THEIR DEFENSE, AND THAT THE COURT HAD BEEN UNFETTERED IN REACHING ITS VERDICT.

4. REFERRING TO PREVIOUS INSTANCES OF HIS COMMUTING DEATH SENTENCES OF THOSE FOUND GUILTY OF CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, MOBUTU CLAIMED THAT HIS OPPONENTS HAD VIEWED THIS AS EVIDENCE OF WEAKNESS. MOST OF THE BENEFICIARIES, HE SAID, HAD CONTINUED TO PLOT AGAINST THE REGIME. HE THEREFORE HAD REJECTED APPEALS FOR CLEMENCY EXCEPT FOR THAT OF ADJUTANT KISONGA (IN THIS CONNECTION MOBUTU EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS FIRST ZAIRIAN WOMAN TO HAVE BECOME INVOLVED IN SUCH PLOTTING. ANNOUNCING THAT THE THIRTEEN COUP PLOTTERS HAD BEEN SHOT AT DAWN, MOBUTU EMPHASIZED THAT HE WOULD ACT WITHOUT PITY
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SHOULD THERE BE FUTURE ATTEMPTS TO SUBVERT THE REGIME: "THOSE WHO LIVE BY THE SWORD SHALL DIE BY THE SWORD."

5. MOBUTU CLOSED HIS SHORT SPEECH BY STATING EMPHATICALLY THAT HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT INTERVENTION OF SUCH PLOTTERS COUCHED IN TERMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

6. COMMENT: FROM LANGUAGE USED BY MOBUTU CONCERNING INVOLVEMENT OF FOREIGN POWERS IN COUP PLOT AS WELL AS FROM CONTEXT IN WHICH STATEMENTS WERE MADE, EMBASSY BELIEVES THOSE ALLEGATIONS WERE DIRECTED AT BELGIANS AND LIBYANS. THERE WERE NO INDICATIONS THAT MOBUTU WAS REFERRING TO THE UNITED STATES.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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